

MARTIN LUTHER
KING JR.



ROSA PARKS



CESAR CHAVEZ



MARY MCLEOD
BETHUNE



FRED KOREMATSU



WILMA MANKILLER



AMERICAN LEADERS IN CIVIL RIGHTS

CIVIL RIGHTS REFERS TO “THE RIGHTS BELONGING TO AN INDIVIDUAL BY VIRTUE OF CITIZENSHIP,”

according to the American Heritage Dictionary.

They include civil liberties, equal protection of the laws, and freedom from racial, ethnic, or religious



discrimination. Each of the Americans featured here has championed the rights of the individual and pioneered the way to greater equality within the United States. These heroes of the civil



rights movement, men and women of courage and conviction, span the 19th and 20th centuries.

Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led the movement toward equal treatment for African Americans. Cesar Chavez petitioned for fair wages and good working conditions for farm workers. Wilma Mankiller became the first woman chief of a Native American tribe. Mary McLeod Bethune was a pioneer in education and a tireless civil rights spokesperson. Fred Korematsu, a Japanese American who was imprisoned during World War II, challenged his arrest and fought to have his conviction overturned.



Attaining civil rights has been a long and hard-fought series of legal battles that continues even today. In his 1963 March on Washington speech, Dr. King perhaps summarized it best: “I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed—we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.”



Top to bottom: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at a voter registration rally in Montgomery, Alabama, 1965. Cesar Chavez, United Farm Workers leader, boycotting grapes in Seattle, Washington, 1969. Two famous civil rights leaders, Fred Korematsu and Rosa Parks, each winner of the Presidential Medal of Honor. Wilma Mankiller, the first woman to be elected Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



"I believe that unarmed truth
and unconditional love will have
the final word in reality.
This is why right, temporarily
defeated, is stronger than
evil triumphant."



THE REVEREND
King Jr. was the most

eloquent voice in the U.S. civil rights movement during the 1950s and '60s. The keynote speaker at the famous March on Washington in 1963, he was also the youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate. ♦ In 1955, King organized the Montgomery Bus Boycott in Alabama. When the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed that the bus segregation laws of Alabama were unconstitutional, the boycott that had lasted for more than a year ended in triumph for black dignity. Overnight, King had become a national hero and an acknowledged leader in the civil rights struggle. He was only 39 years old when he was felled by an assassin's bullet. Martin Luther King Jr. never wavered in his insistence that nonviolence must remain the central tactic of the civil rights movement, nor in his faith that everyone in America would some day attain equal justice.

MARTIN LUTHER
eloquent voice in the

Above: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. leads thousands of civil rights marchers who gathered for a three-mile walk to Montgomery, Alabama, for a voter registration rally in 1965. At right: In Grenada, Mississippi, Dr. King escorts children to formerly all-white schools where violence had erupted as they were integrated in September 1966.





1929 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. 1968

ROSA PARKS



"I didn't feel good about going to jail, but I was willing to go to let it be known that under this type of segregation, black people had endured too much for too long."

ON A DECEMBER Rosa Parks, a seamstress work, refused to give up



Alabama, bus to a white man—an action required by local law at the time. Her arrest sparked a year-long boycott of the city bus system by her fellow African Americans. A year later, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that laws requiring segregation on public transportation were illegal. In the 50 years since this courageous act launched a movement, the Montgomery Bus Boycott has become a landmark on the path toward equality for all people. Mrs. Parks, who died in 2005, is known as "the mother of the civil rights movement."

EVENING IN 1955, on her way home from her seat on a Montgomery,

Above: Rosa Parks enters a Montgomery, Alabama, court in 1956, to be arraigned for refusing to give up her seat on a bus, as required by local segregation laws. At right: In December 1956, following the Supreme Court ruling ending 381 days of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Rosa Parks rides on an integrated bus.





1913

ROSA PARKS

2005

CESAR CHAVEZ



"The love for justice
that is in us is not only
the best part of our being,
but it is also the most
true to our nature."



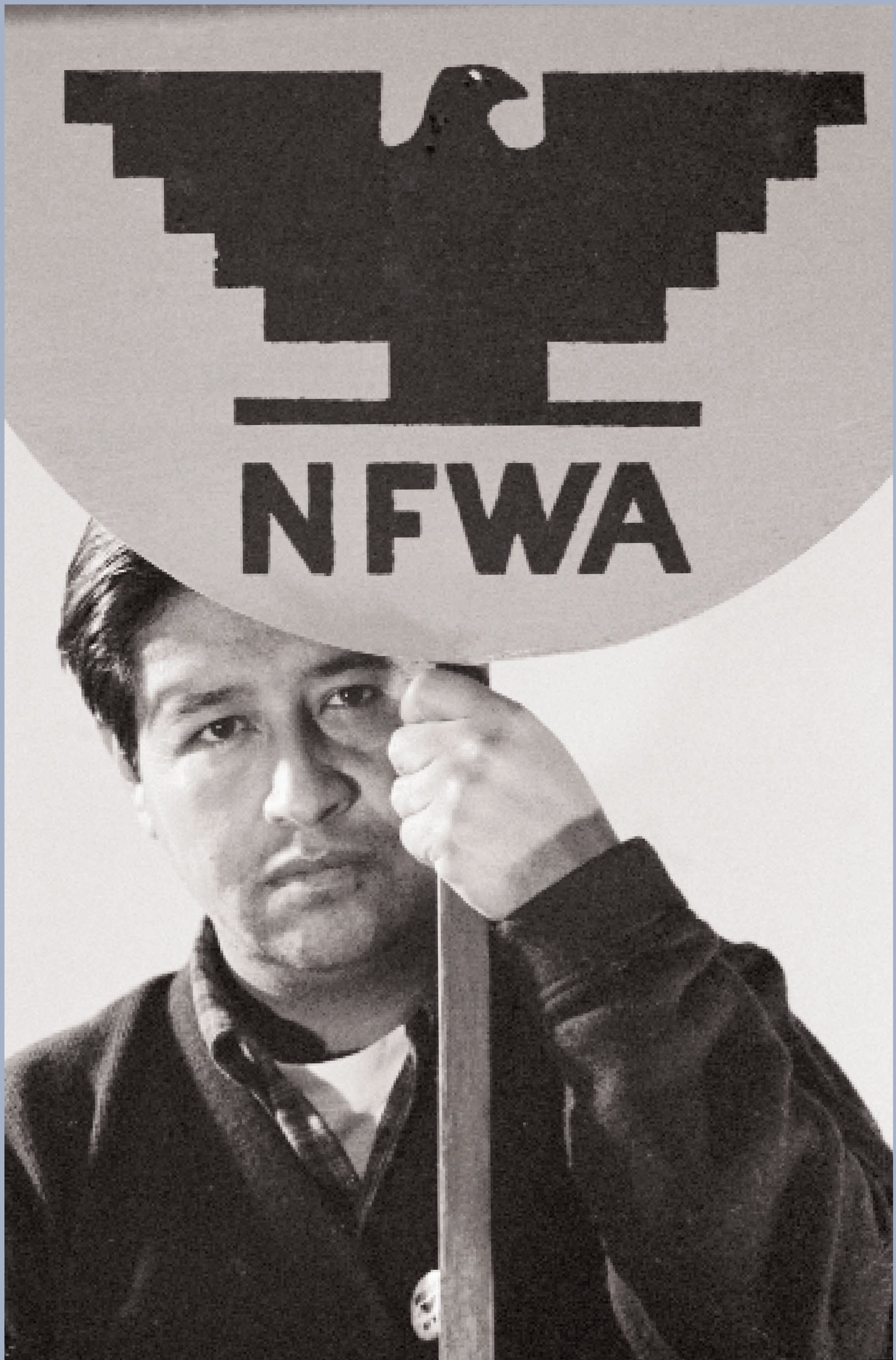
CESAR CHAVEZ
most important labor

WAS ONE OF THE
organizers and advo-

cates for fair treatment for workers in U.S. history. Growing up in Arizona, Chavez was no stranger to prejudice and injustice as a Mexican American. He left school after the eighth grade to help support his family as a migrant farm worker after they lost their land during the Depression. Dedicated to non-violence, in 1962 Chavez founded what was to become the United Farmworkers Union and convinced millions of Americans to support the farmworkers' struggle for dignity and social justice for the poor. His efforts also led to the Chicano activism of the 1960s and '70s, and helped create a Latino civil rights movement. In 2004, the United States Postal Service honored him by creating a postage stamp with his image.

Above: Cesar Chavez joins other United Farm Workers Association members in boycotting the use of pesticides. At right: In 1965 Cesar Chavez grips the pole of a picket sign that featured the symbol of his farm workers movement, a Thunderbird Eagle. The California strikers demanded wages at the level of the federal minimum wage.





1927

CESAR CHAVEZ

1993

MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE



"Democracy is for me, and for 12 million black Americans, a goal towards which our nation is marching. It is a dream and an ideal in whose ultimate realization we have a deep and abiding faith."



BORN TO FORMER
Carolina, Mary McLeod

educator, organizer, and champion of civil rights. In 1923, she merged the girls' school she had founded in 1904 with Cookman Institute for Men to create Bethune-Cookman College, the first fully accredited black institution of higher learning in the state of Florida. 🐦 Bethune campaigned rigorously against discrimination in employment as president of the National Association of Colored Women and, in 1935, established the National Council of Negro Women. The following year she was appointed administrative assistant for Negro Affairs by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. During World War II, Mrs. Bethune campaigned for desegregation in the armed forces. Throughout her life, she was a leader of women, a distinguished adviser to several American presidents, and a powerful defender of racial equality.

SLAVES IN SOUTH
Bethune was a tireless

*Above: Mary McLeod Bethune with a line of girls from the school that she founded in 1904.
At right: An early portrait of Mary McLeod Bethune, taken around the time she founded her
school in Daytona, Florida, shows a young woman with strength and uncommon determination.*



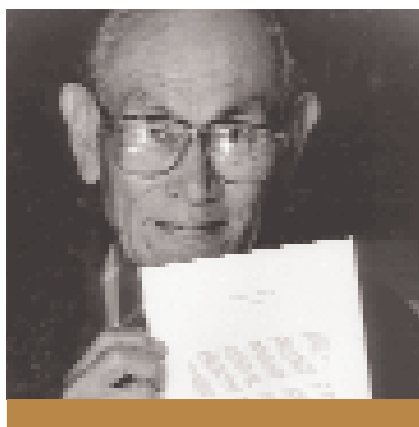


1875 MARY MCCLEOD BETHUNE 1955

FRED KOREMATSU



"If you have the
feeling that
something is wrong,
don't be afraid
to speak up."



AFTER THE JAPANESE
Harbor on December 7,

NAVY ATTACKED PEARL
1941, the United States

and Japan were at war. For more than 100,000 U.S. residents of Japanese heritage, the war brought special tragedy. They were imprisoned in internment camps. Fred Korematsu challenged his arrest and the treatment of Japanese Americans during the war. In 1983, a federal court judge overturned Korematsu's conviction, and in 1988 Congress passed a law calling the internment a "grave injustice," and offering a presidential apology and reparations to those wrongfully imprisoned. In 1998 Fred Korematsu was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.

Above: Fred Korematsu, with his redress and reparations paper in 1990. At right, center: Korematsu, in foreground, in his family-owned nursery, circa 1939. Middle inset: The internment camp in Topaz, Utah, where the Korematsu family was housed. Background: Blocks of barracks in Amache, Colorado, in 1943, where other Japanese Americans were relocated.





1919

FRED KOREMATSU

2005

WILMA MANKILLER



"Young Cherokee girls
would never have
thought that they
might grow up and
become chief."



THE FIRST FEMALE
the Cherokee Nation

PRINCIPAL CHIEF OF
of Oklahoma, Wilma

Mankiller is the most celebrated Cherokee (Native American) of the 20th century, receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1998. She signed a landmark self-government agreement in 1990 that allowed her people to manage federal funds previously administered on their behalf by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs. As chief of the Cherokee Nation, she established a tax commission and improved the Cherokee courts, education, and police. In a larger sense, as chief she sought to turn the Cherokee from their male-dominated structure back to their traditional ways that emphasize a balance between men and women.

Above: On the Cherokee Indian Reservation in Oklahoma in 2000, Wilma Mankiller, the first female leader to be elected Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, stands beside a statue of John Ross, one of the Principal Chiefs of the 19th century. At right: A portrait of Mankiller around 1990, in Tablequah, Oklahoma, the headquarters of the Cherokee Nation.





1945

WILMA MANKILLER